

OBJECTIVES*

The objectives of a course are the primary components and skills leading to student achievement and the course's intended purpose. The objectives should specify these components and skills to ensure that all faculty delivering the course share a common understanding and can therefore enable students to achieve the intended student learning outcomes across all sections and terms in which the course is taught. Objectives should be written in complete sentences or comprehensive phrases using language that is discipline specific and demonstrates the level of rigor appropriate for the class.

The COR should demonstrate that the course meets the standards for level and intensity in both quantity and effort as appropriate for the number of units and hours assigned to the course. The faculty member designing the course will need to determine a reasonable time frame for most students entering at the requisite levels to acquire capabilities defined by each objective.

The format for each objective typically begins with the phrase "Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to..." These items are sometimes referred to as "behavioral objectives." These objectives can be measured through a range of assessments, including the use of rubrics to measure performance quality in writing, computation, or other skills.

Course Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes

Course objectives state the concepts or skills faculty introduce to students in a course or program in order to prepare students to meet a student learning outcome (SLO). Objectives are the means, not the ends. Course SLOs are the intended abilities and knowledge students can demonstrate after successfully completing the course objectives. SLOs must be written in measurable or observable terms and as actions that a student will perform in order to display the skills necessary to meet the SLO.

For example, for an introductory swimming course, the course objectives might consist of all four competitive swimming strokes; the course SLOs will measure the student's ability to perform all four strokes. The following is an example of a course objective that supports an SLO for a swimming course:

Course objective:

Demonstrate proper breathing techniques and arm position for the backstroke.

SLO:

Swim the backstroke for at least ten yards.

In this example, a student can demonstrate the SLO only after completing the objective.

Another example might be as follows:

Course objectives:

Demonstrate proper breathing techniques and arm position for the backstroke.
Demonstrate proper breathing techniques and arm position for the front crawl.
Demonstrate proper breathing techniques and arm position for the breaststroke.
Demonstrate proper breathing techniques and arm position for the butterfly.

SLO:

Swim all four strokes of the medley relay for 25 meters each within 3 minutes.

In this example, all four objectives provide the scaffolding of skills the students need to be able to demonstrate an SLO; the SLO synthesizes the content and skills learned by completing all the objectives.

*Excerpt: *The Course Outline of Record: A Curriculum Reference Guide Revisited (ASCCC Spring 2017)*
https://websites.rcc.edu/curriculum/files/2019/08/asccc_Curriculum_Reference_Revisited_2017.pdf